



DEVELOPMENT INNOVATION VENTURES

2022 Awardees

[Development Innovation Ventures](#) (DIV) is USAID’s open innovation program that funds breakthrough solutions to the world’s toughest development challenges. By funding innovation through evidence-driven approaches, DIV impacts millions of lives at a fraction of the usual cost. In 2022, DIV added 25 new awards to its portfolio. Brief descriptions of these grants can be found below.

Development Innovation Ventures:

- Offers tiered funding to pilot, test, and scale the most promising solutions to global development challenges, taking calculated risks to maximize taxpayer resources.
- Develops and applies rigorous evidence to determine what works most effectively to improve people’s lives.
- Supports promising ideas from a broad range of partners, including social entrepreneurs, nonprofits, private companies, government partners, and researchers across every sector and country in which USAID operates.

DIV provides small amounts of funding to help advance a variety of relatively unproven ideas; larger amounts of funding help scale rigorously validated solutions. The “stages” in grantee profiles correspond with the following:

STAGE 1 	Pilot: Up to \$200,000 to pilot innovations that are early in development and need real-world testing to understand user demand, social outcomes, and feasibility.
STAGE 2 	Test and Position for Scale: Up to \$1.5 million to support impact evaluations, further market testing, or operational expansion of innovations that have already conducted successful pilot testing.
STAGE 3 	Transition to Scale: Up to \$15 million to transition proven approaches to scale.
Evidence Generation 	Up to \$1.5 million to evaluate widely-used approaches that lack sufficient evidence of causal impact and cost-effectiveness.

Photo: A community grandmother sits with a client on the Friendship Bench at a health clinic in Zimbabwe to provide evidence-based talk therapy focused on opening the mind, uplifting, and encouraging the client in their recovery from depression and anxiety. Credit: Costa Juta For Friendship Bench

To learn more about DIV, what it offers, and how we can work together to support evidence-based innovation, please contact: div@usaid.gov

2022 DIV GRANTS IN AFRICA

Implemented in:

Ghana, Nigeria

DIV Stage:

Stage 3: \$2,100,000

Sector(s):

Energy

Scaling Clean Cooking—BURN Manufacturing West Africa Expansion

Burn Manufacturing Co. | Vashon, Washington

www.burnstoves.com

BURN Manufacturing is one of the most successful manufacturers of high-efficiency cookstoves, having already manufactured and sold over one million stoves in East Africa. With DIV support, BURN will accelerate its impact by expanding production and sales to Ghana and Nigeria. With this expansion, BURN is expected to reach six million people, generate substantial household savings on fuel, and reduce pollution and pressure on deforestation. BURN is the second organization to have received all stages of DIV funding. Learn more about BURN's [Stage 1](#) and [Stage 2](#) awards.

Implemented in:

Rwanda:

DIV Stage:

Stage 3: \$1,510,000

Sector(s):

Education and Training

Supporting Teacher Achievement in Rwandan Schools (STARS)

Georgetown University | Washington, D.C.

www.georgetown.edu

Georgetown University and its partners will assist Rwanda's Ministry of Education to refine and scale an evidence-based, pay-for-performance contract that rewards the top 20 percent of Rwandan teachers. Using rapid A/B tests, the researchers will determine which combination of incentives is most effective as the contract scales to one-third of primary school districts—including more than 370,000 students. Georgetown will also work with Innovations for Poverty Action to evaluate the effect of pay-for-performance contracts on teacher recruitment and student learning outcomes. The Fund for Innovation in Development awarded Georgetown complementary funding to support governance, data management, and implementation through Rwandan government systems.

Implemented in:

Kenya, Rwanda,
South Africa

DIV Stage:

Stage 2: \$900,000

Sector(s):

Education and Training

Income Share Agreements to Finance Education

Chancen International

www.chancen.international

Chancen will expand its Income Share Agreement model—a form of college financing where repayments are based on a student's future income—to South Africa and Kenya and improve its monitoring and evaluation framework in Rwanda. This award will also strengthen the impact of the Development Finance Corporation's \$7 million loan to Chancen's blended finance fund, which will provide tuition for 10,000 youth in Rwanda. Chancen's Income Share Agreement model has the potential to enable millions of students across Africa to improve their lives by developing high-quality, market relevant skills, leading to improved job opportunities and sustained economic growth.

Implemented in:

Kenya

DIV Stage:

Stage 2: \$1.5 million

Sector(s):

Health

Scaling Pre-Hospital Care Services and Systems Throughout Kenyarescue.cowww.rescue.co

Rescue.co will rigorously study the impact of its cloud-based ambulance dispatch service on mortality and morbidity rates. The funding will also be used to develop and strengthen public sector partnerships and scale the service across Kenya. Rescue.co has already reduced the average access time to medical treatment for its patients from 162 minutes to 18 minutes. With DIV support, it expects to serve 1.2 million more people in Uasin Gishu county, support 10,000 dispatches per year, and demonstrate to policymakers in Kenya and beyond that the Rescue.co model is a scalable solution for emergency services.

Implemented in:

Ghana

DIV Stage:

Stage 2: \$871,178

Sector(s):Democracy and
Governance**Building Local State Capacity: Evidence From Technology Investments**[President and Fellows of Harvard College | Cambridge, Massachusetts](#)www.harvard.edu

Harvard University will work with the Ghanaian government to test the impact of an app that provides tax collectors with maps of all property and tax valuations, tax payment histories and receipts, and household geolocation data. Harvard will conduct three randomized controlled trials to determine the effects of adopting tax collection technology on local revenue generation, citizen morale, and barriers to technology adoption.

Implemented in:

Ghana

DIV Stage:

Stage 1: \$199,646

Sector(s):

Health

MotoMeds: Providing Essential Nighttime Healthcare to Children[University of Florida | Gainesville, Florida](#)www.ufl.edu

The University of Florida's MotoMeds program is a pediatric nighttime telemedicine and medication delivery service that provides effective, low-cost treatment to young children in need of after-hours healthcare. Caregivers can call MotoMeds' free number to speak to a care provider who will follow evidence-based guidelines to assess the child, develop a treatment plan, and dispatch medicine via motorcycle when necessary. With DIV support, the University of Florida will partner with the Ghanaian National Ambulance Service to expand MotoMeds in the capital city of Accra. This pilot partnership aims to reduce mortality among children under five, and to inform future implementation of MotoMeds in Ghana and other countries.

Implemented in:

Ghana

DIV Stage:

Stage 1: \$200,000

Sector(s):

Health

Point-of-Care Iron Deficiency Testing Program[VitaMe Technologies \(DBA VitaScan\) | Ithaca, New York](#)www.vitascan.me

VitaScan, in partnership with Ghanaian healthcare company mPharma, will evaluate the effectiveness of a new blood test that detects ferritin, an indicator of iron deficiency, in populations with a higher prevalence of tropical infections and inflammations—particularly malaria. After the trial, VitaScan will adjust the test—called IronScan—to ensure its accuracy in varied country contexts before finalizing product development and seeking U.S. Food and Drug Administration clearance.

VitaScan intends to develop a final product that has the potential to benefit millions of people worldwide.

Implemented in:

Nigeria

DIV Stage:

Stage 2: \$1,500,000

Sector(s):

Health

Evaluating a Digital Health Tool to Improve Clinical Capacity

THINKMD | Burlington, Vermont

www.thinkmd.org

THINKMD has developed an app-based digital diagnostic tool that helps frontline health workers evaluate and treat patients according to World Health Organization guidelines and standard medical procedures. With DIV support, THINKMD will conduct a randomized controlled trial to determine whether the tool can enable community health workers and nurses to provide a similar quality of care to that offered by medical doctors.

Implemented in:

Nigeria

DIV Stage:

Stage 2: \$1,500,000

Sector(s):

Health

Evaluating the Impact of a Needle-Free Delivery Device on Polio Immunization

PharmaJet | Golden, Colorado

www.pharmajet.com

In Nigeria, PharmaJet will trial Tropis, a needle-free jet injector vaccine delivery device that provides painless vaccines. With DIV support, PharmaJet will conduct a cluster randomized controlled trial to assess Tropis's effect on polio vaccination coverage. The study will also examine Tropis costs compared with the traditional needle and syringe vaccination model. The rigorous data produced from this trial will help inform countries and international organizations about the most appropriate method to vaccinate against deadly diseases.

Implemented in:

Malawi

DIV Stage:

Stage 2: \$1,500,000

Sector(s):

Health

Using Drones to Strengthen Medical Supply Chains

Swoop Aero Pty Ltd

www.swoop.aero

Swoop operates a drone network that delivers medicines over long distances and difficult terrain. It will expand drone operations to 100 additional medical facilities across hard-to-reach districts in southern Malawi and northern islands where drones will provide real-time medical supplies and services. This award will support data analytics organization IDinsight to conduct the first rigorous trial focused on the efficacy of drones to improve health outcomes.

Implemented in:

Mali

DIV Stage:

Stage 2: \$840,030

Sector(s):

Economic Growth,
Agriculture and
Food Security

Scaling Agricultural Input Markets

Innovations for Poverty Action | Washington, D.C.

www.poverty-action.org

Innovations for Poverty Action will incentivize local enterprises to organize agricultural input fairs, which bring together farmers and companies selling agricultural products. Innovations for Poverty Action will then evaluate the impact of these fairs on farmers' uptake of productive inputs, crop yields, and livelihoods, including potential income gains, food security, and poverty reduction. This award builds on a successful [Evidence Generation award](#) (2019–2022) which demonstrated that village input fairs are a promising, market-driven approach to improve farm yields and income.

Implemented in:
Rwanda

DIV Stage:
Evidence: \$1,245,217

Sector(s):
Economic Growth

Evaluating a Facilitated Collective Action Process on Poverty Alleviation

Spark MicroGrants | New York City, New York
www.sparkmicrogrants.org

Spark will partner with Innovations for Poverty Action to evaluate the effectiveness of a community-driven development program to select and implement public infrastructure projects. Spark's quasi-experimental study will provide coaching, facilitation training for elected local government officials, and an \$8,000 grant to community-selected social enterprises and projects. The aim of the research is to understand if additional support (such as training and coaching) strengthens community-driven development programs and alleviates poverty more effectively. The study's results will inform how the Government of Rwanda and the World Bank implement community-driven development models in 12,000 villages across Rwanda. Support from DIV is complemented by funding from the Japan Social Development Fund.

Implemented in:
Sierra Leone

DIV Stage:
Stage 2: \$1,500,000

Sector(s):
Health

Assessing the Educational Impact of Providing Eyeglasses to Students

Innovations for Poverty Action | Washington, D.C.
www.poverty-action.org

Innovations for Poverty Action will partner with Vision Aid Overseas and Sierra Leone's National Eye Health Program to evaluate different vision testing services and the impact of eyeglasses on educational outcomes among primary and secondary school students. Innovations for Poverty Action will conduct a cluster randomized controlled trial to learn how students are affected when they receive free eyeglasses that are either customized or one-size-fits-all. Innovations for Poverty Action will also test the ability of low-cost technologies, such as a laser-etched near vision chart, to detect farsightedness. These studies will generate critical evidence to inform the design of a national school vision screening and eyeglasses program in Sierra Leone.

Implemented in:
Sierra Leone

DIV Stage:
Stage 2: \$1,500,000

Sector(s):
Health

Social Incentives for Childhood Immunization

Innovations for Poverty Action | Washington, D.C.
www.poverty-action.org

Innovations for Poverty Action, in collaboration with the government of Sierra Leone, will scale a promising vaccine incentive program to 365 clinics across the country. In previous versions of this program, researchers successfully incentivized timely immunizations by giving different colored bracelets to children to publicly indicate their progress through a series of routine vaccines. Innovations for Poverty Action will now study the effects of giving a bracelet after a final vaccine in a series and compare the efficacy of bracelet incentives against other behavioral nudges, such as mobile messaging. Innovations for Poverty Action will also scope opportunities to expand the program to Liberia, where 49 percent of children do not receive all basic vaccinations, and Nigeria, where 3.1 million children do not complete their first-year vaccinations.

Implemented in:
Zimbabwe

DIV Stage:
Stage 2: \$1,320,000

Sector(s):
Health, Education and
Training

Training Lay Counselors to Deliver Mental Health Services

Friendship Bench

www.friendshipbenchzimbabwe.org

Friendship Bench has developed lay-counselor training programs for government nurses and community health workers to provide cognitive behavioral therapy for people seeking mental health services. With DIV support, Friendship Bench will strengthen its structures, systems, partnerships, and engagement strategy in preparation for scaling. Friendship Bench will train 60 district-level mental health nurses who, in turn, will then train 500 lay counselors. These counselors are expected to reach approximately 100,000 patients during the award period. This investment is designed to lay the foundation for training a cadre of lay counselors who can reach 1.5 million patients in Zimbabwe over the next five years.

Implemented in:
Liberia

DIV Stage:
Stage 2: \$395,000

Sector(s):
Agriculture and
Food Security,
Education and Training

Building a Sustainable System of Agricultural Extension in Schools

Innovations for Poverty Action | Washington, D.C.

www.poverty-action.org

Innovations for Poverty Action will conduct a randomized controlled trial to evaluate the effect of a school-based agricultural extension program on student attendance, science and math scores, entrepreneurial knowledge, financial literacy, and farming practices. This grant complements funding from the Fund for Innovation in Development to measure household crop yields. Findings from both studies will inform expansion of the program to ten countries over the next decade and establish a knowledge base for other countries to improve their extension services.

2022 DIV GRANTS IN ASIA

Implemented in:

Uzbekistan

DIV Stage:

Stage 1: \$200,000

Sector(s):

Health, Democracy and Governance

Addressing Vaccine Misinformation With an Inoculation Chatbot

Nudge Lebanon

www.nudgelebanon.org

Nudge Lebanon will partner with the Government of Uzbekistan to pilot a chatbot that uses behavioral science to protect against misinformation. A randomized controlled trial will identify whether the chatbot helps users better spot manipulation techniques, reduces willingness to share manipulation techniques, and improves willingness to be vaccinated against common illnesses. If effective, the chatbot has the potential to help guard millions of people against a broad range of misinformation.

Implemented in:

India

DIV Stage:

Evidence Generation:
\$600,000

Sector(s):

Democracy and Governance

A Tough Call: Impacts of Mobile Technology on Work, Gender Gaps, and Norms

Yale University | New Haven, Connecticut

www.yale.edu

Yale will generate evidence on the impact of an Indian Government program that distributed free mobile phones and data plans to women who are the heads of households in Chhattisgarh, one of India's poorest states. The wide-ranging study will examine how access to phones and data affected economic outcomes, access to information, and social norms around the acceptability of women using mobile technology. This research will generate critical evidence on the efficacy of programs designed to close the gender digital divide.

Implemented in:

India

DIV Stage:

Stage 2: \$1,497,850

Sector(s):

Education and Training

Positioning an Evidence-Based Early Childhood Stimulation Program for Scale

Pratham

www.pratham.org

Pratham will scale its simplified early childhood stimulation program to 14,000 children per year across both urban and rural regions through partnerships with community volunteers, local community groups, and eventually through India's Anganwadi system of rural childcare centers. With DIV support, Pratham aims to demonstrate a more cost-effective way to scale this proven program to policymakers. Large-scale uptake of this rigorously validated model could improve early childhood development and long-term educational outcomes for millions of children across India.

Implemented in:

India

DIV Stage:

Stage 2: \$500,000

Sector(s):

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

Scaling up Fecal Sludge Management Through Mobile Treatment Units
Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Institutewww.washinstitute.org

The Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Institute has developed Mobile Treatment Units that empty and treat fecal sludge from septic tanks at the site, collecting the solids and discharging treated water that can be used for general irrigation. With DIV support, the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Institute will test a range of public- and private-sector partnership approaches and business models to position Mobile Treatment Units for significant scale.

Implemented in:

India

DIV Stage:

Stage 1: \$197,000

Sector(s):

Agriculture and Food Security, Environment

Piloting a Business Model for Sensor-Controlled Riverbank Filtration**The Energy and Resources Institute**www.teriin.org

The Energy and Resources Institute will test the effectiveness of a riverbank water filtration system to improve clean water access and promote the more efficient use of irrigation. The filtration system includes a new combination of field sensors and irrigation pumps to better target water needs to improve crop yields and increase livelihood earnings. The Energy and Resources Institute will also pilot a business model that allows farmers to pool their resources and collectively purchase the filtration and sensor system.

Implemented in:

Pakistan

DIV Stage:Evidence Generation:
\$200,000**Sector(s):**

Economic Growth

Bridging the Digital Divide in Job Search**Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan**www.cerp.org.pk

The Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan will partner with Duke University to conduct a randomized controlled trial on whether a follow-up call and text messages to nudge subscribers increases job application rates more effectively than a one-step approach. The results of this evaluation will inform policies and interventions aimed at increasing the participation and economic empowerment of people often excluded from the labor market.

Implemented in:

Pakistan

DIV Stage:

Stage 1: \$199,25.45

Sector(s):

Health, Education and Training

Interactive Mobile Support for Front-Line Workers Promoting Breastfeeding**Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan**www.cerp.org.pk

The Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan will partner with Duke University, Aga Khan University, and the Punjab Lady Health Worker program to develop and test an app that uses behavior change approaches to nudge frontline workers to discuss breastfeeding with their clients in a culturally appropriate way. Although the app is designed to be used by frontline workers, if successful, the overall approach could be adapted to other sectors, particularly where an intermediary aims to facilitate behavior change.

2022 DIV GRANTS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Implemented in:

Colombia

DIV Stage:

Stage 1: \$200,000

Sector(s):

Economic Growth

Banking Agents as Financial Inclusion Promoters in Underserved Areas

Fundación Capital

www.fundacioncapital.org

Fundación Capital will enhance its app that makes financial services available to rural communities by enabling financial institutions to reach underserved populations through local retail stores and post offices. The app trains retail staff to process transactions for the financial institutions. Fundación Capital will test and validate a new functionality that enables the retail agents to refer clients to financial institutions, which is expected to increase access to financial products, such as credit. Offering banking services to underserved populations through local retail stores has the potential to help improve the financial access of more than 11 million unbanked smallholder farmers, day laborers, microentrepreneurs, and informal employees in rural areas of Colombia.

Implemented in:

Peru

DIV Stage:

Stage 2: \$1,328,442

Sector(s):

Education and Training

Scaling a Technology-Based Early Childhood Care Intervention

Innovations for Poverty Action | Washington, D.C.

www.poverty-action.org

Innovations for Poverty Action will conduct a randomized controlled trial evaluating a smartphone app that uses content from an early childhood development program that is usually implemented in person. The app shows parents easy ways to engage and stimulate the minds of their young children and, if effective, would significantly reduce costs. The research is designed to inform public policies on how to cost-effectively bring early childhood care and stimulation programs to scale, in order to set children up for success before they start school.